

# Frequently Asked Questions

By Mattie Mendoza and Phil Lockwood

***Q: Is there a new way to get my FBI background check?***

**A:** Yes, it's called the FBI Fast Pass System. The new fingerprint process is electronic and much easier and faster than the previous one. You can contact any L1 Identity Solutions ([www.iisfingerprint.com](http://www.iisfingerprint.com)), the fingerprint contractor, either by phone or online, and pay the fee up front with a credit card or an electronic check. You then go to the closest L1 Identity Solutions site to have your (inkless) fingerprints taken electronically. The federal background check results are sent electronically directly to our EMS office in one to two weeks. (This is much quicker than the 16-18 weeks the FBI's website now lists as the processing time for the paper fingerprint card process.) This process will initially be used for all out-of-state reciprocity applications, but will eventually be available for initial applicants as well. More information to come on this new process as it's available.

***Q: Once I have my National Registry card, am I automatically state-certified as well?***

**A:** No, the National Registry and the State of Texas EMS certification are two separate entities. You are only legal to work in Texas if you have attained Texas certification, which means you must submit an application, pay the appropriate fee and meet all other initial certification

requirements, including taking the National Registry exam. You can find all of the requirements for initial Texas certification on the website at [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/CertInfo.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/CertInfo.shtm). The National Registry has its own application process. The National Registry does **not** submit your state certification application for you. For information about National Registry, or to schedule your exam, please contact the National Registry, or view their website at [www.nremt.org/](http://www.nremt.org/).

***Q: What is the difference between EMT-P and licensed paramedic (LP)? And can I apply for LP?***

**A:** Basically the difference between the two is a college degree. You may apply for licensed paramedic if you currently hold Texas certification at the EMT-P level. According to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §157.40(1), a currently certified EMT-P may apply for a paramedic license if the candidate has at least one of the following degrees from an institution of post-secondary education which has been accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an approved accrediting authority:

- (A) an associate degree in emergency medical services (EMS);
- (B) a baccalaureate degree; or
- (C) a postgraduate degree.

You can find all of the

requirements for EMT-P and licensed paramedic certification on our website at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems). Or, feel free to contact our office at: 512/834-6700.

***Q: What is that number I am given at the end of the electronic application process and do I need to keep it?***

**A:** It is commonly referred to as the trace number, and **you need to keep it**. It is your proof that you submitted your application and paid the application fee. You will only receive a trace number if you complete the electronic application process. The trace number (it begins with the numbers 537) is the only way for EMS certification staff to retrieve your electronic application if there is a problem. Electronic application submission is preferable for many reasons: it reduces mail time so it reaches the EMS office faster; you can pay with either an electronic check or credit card; it is safe and secure; and is available to you 24 hours a day. But, if you do not save or write down your trace number, you have no proof that you ever submitted an electronic application or paid the fee.

***Q: I passed my National Registry test and have received my paperwork. Do I have to wait for my state certification before I start riding out on the ambulance?***

**A:** Yes, current state certification

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must be confirmed before staffing an ambulance in Texas. Health & Safety Code, §773.064 reads as follows: “A person commits an offense if the person knowingly practices as, attempts to practice as, or represents himself to be an emergency medical technician-paramedic, emergency medical technician-intermediate, emergency medical technician, emergency care

attendant, or licensed paramedic, and the person does not hold an appropriate certificate issued by the department under this chapter. An offense under this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor.”

***Q: I understand that the state went to private computerized testing for all levels except for the instructor exam, which you still***

***administer. But, the automated exam scheduler system isn't on your webpage any more. How do I arrange for an instructor exam?***

**A:** Call the EMS field office in the area where you want to test. For field office contact information, see [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/regions.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/regions.shtm).



## Are you eligible?

If you want to be eligible for grants from DSHS, check online to make sure your service is listed.

The Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination (OEMS/TS) is updating the list of potentially eligible 9-1-1 providers for the FY08 EMS Allotments. The list of EMS 9-1-1 providers we will use to determine eligibility for FY08 funding is available on our website. Please review the list carefully for two things:

- 1) Is your EMS service listed as a 9-1-1 provider in the counties where you operate?
  - If your EMS service is not listed in a county in which you operate, please contact our office immediately (see contact info below).
- 2) Does our office have a contract on file for those counties, outside your county of licensure, where you provide service?
  - If you are a provider operating in a county other than your county of licensure\*, our office must have a copy of the contract or letter of confirmation from that county. The contracts we have on file are indicated in the “contract if needed” column in the attached spreadsheet on our website. If you only operate in your county of licensure, we do not need this information.
  - \*Please note: Rule 157.130 and 157.131 define county of licensure as the county which lies within the location of the mailing address of a licensed ambulance provider, as indicated by the provider on the application for licensure that it filed with DSHS.

The list of potentially eligible 911-providers is located at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/SB102Elig.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/SB102Elig.shtm). Click on the TSA links located on the lower part of the page.

To update your EMS provider or contract information on the list, contact us by email at: [linda.reyes@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:linda.reyes@dshs.state.tx.us) or phone at: 512/834-6684.